The University of Chicago

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A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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CIVIL SERVICE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES[1]

HERBERT GOLDHOR

INTRODUCTION

THIS is a report of the results of an investigation undertaken to evaluate the effects of the application of civil service on the practices used in the selection of employees for public libraries. Based on information collected by field visits early in 1942, the method used was to compare the personnel policies and practices, in the years 1937–41, of six public libraries in cities of over two hundred thousand population—three under civil service and three not under civil service. These cities were selected, with the help of three experts in librarianship, as being above the average of the group from which they were drawn in the quality of their general internal administration: Los Angeles, Oakland, and St. Paul of the civil service group; and Detroit, Portland, and Providence of the non-civil service group.

The criteria for evaluation were supplied by twenty principles of public personnel administration, formulated in the light of the concept of a career service in government. The area of employee selection alone was considered, with special emphasis on the selection of junior librarians, who occupy the basic class of the professional service and the most important class in the development of a career service. The findings are presented according to six major topics under which the principles naturally group themselves.

This study attempts to measure the degree to which the standard practices of employee selection are used by the three civil service libraries as compared with their use by the three comparable non-civil service libraries. It answers the question "Do civil service or non-civil service libraries have better employees?" only to the extent that one is prepared to assume that the approved principles of public personnel administration secure "better" employees. Specifically, the question to which this study was addressed may be stated thus: In the light of experience has civil service helped or hindered public libraries in the use of the policies and practices of modern personnel administration that are considered essential to a career service?[2]

Two terms require definition. A "civil

[1] The essential portion of a dissertation submitted to the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago in September, 1942, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

[2] For a detailed statement of the problem and a description of the methodology used see Herbert Goldhor, "The Selection of Employees in Large

service library" is one that is required by law to fill vacancies on its staff by the appointment of persons selected through competitive examinations administered by a governmental agency independent of the library. A "career service" is here taken to mean (1) that young people of the highest obtainable qualifications are induced to enter the service of an institution; (2) that provision is made for assurance of tenure and good working conditions, coupled with the fullest opportunities for promotion; and (3) that there is no discrimination on grounds unrelated to merit.

ORGANIZATION FOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

The first important subdivision of the field of employee selection—one that is relevant to the study of any area of personnel administration—concerns the general plan for the organization of personnel administration in the institution. Desirable features of such organization are: (1) There should be definite and adequate provision for personnel administration, with a qualified individual in charge. (2) An officially approved statement of the library's personnel policy should be made available to employees. (3) Staff turnover should be neither very high nor very low.

Provision for personnel administration.—The legal and ultimate responsibility for personnel administration in both the civil service and the non-civil service libraries is lodged in the hands of the board of trustees or other governing authority. Usually the delegation to the chief librarian of the immediate responsibility for this function of administration is made explicitly; in St. Paul and Providence, however, it is made only implicitly. In most cases, too, the chief librarian himself handles personnel administration. In Los Angeles the assistant city librarian is in charge of branches and, subject to the control of the city librarian, of personnel administration for the whole system. In the Detroit Public Library the chief librarian is assisted by a full-time personnel officer who has the rank of department head and is one of very few such officers in American libraries.

From each of the six institutions an estimate was secured of the amount of time and money devoted to personnel administration. These estimates are based on incomplete data and justify only very general conclusions. The amount of time spent on personnel administration in these libraries ranges from half-time of one person to full time of three, but the monetary equivalent is almost uniformly a little more than 1 per cent of the total library pay roll. When the expenditures of the civil service commissions are added to these library expenditures, it is found that more than twice as much money is being spent on personnel administration per employee in the civil service libraries as in the non-civil service libraries; but it is probable that the machinery and routines of civil service account for the difference. The civil service and non-civil service libraries themselves, however, give approximately the same degree of attention to personnel administration.

Similarly, there is no consistent difference in the qualifications of the individuals in these libraries to whom personnel administration is assigned. None of them had any formal training or special experience in this field before assuming their duties, though all have had years of administrative experience in libraries. No annual reports on personnel administra-

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Civil Service and Non-Civil Service Public Libraries" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Library School, University of Chicago, 1942).

tion were prepared in the last five years in any of the libraries investigated; in none have any studies of personnel administration been undertaken. All in all, the single most important fact that stands out in this section is the existence of a full-time personnel officer in the Detroit Public Library, a non-civil service institution.

Statement of personnel policy.—The necessity for a statement of the library's personnel policies seems to have been more generally recognized by the non-civil service libraries in this study than by the civil service libraries. The latter tend to rely on the rules of their respective civil service commissions. Such rules, however, are not always readily available; they need to be "translated," furthermore, so that library employees may grasp their significance; and, finally, they cover only a part of the total area of personnel administration. Only in the Oakland Public Library, of the three civil service libraries, has a recent statement of personnel policy appeared.

All three of the non-civil service libraries, on the other hand, have issued such statements of policy since 1939. Of these, Portland's "Staff Manual"[3] is the best. Generally these documents are not distributed individually to new employees but are made available in every branch or department. Generally, too, there is no definite provision for future revision of the statement. Measured by what might be done in this direction, public libraries can be said to have failed to give the matter the attention it deserves. Measured by actual practice, it is clear that the practices of the non-civil service libraries in the study are superior to those of the civil service institutions.

[3] Library Association of Portland, "Staff Manual" (Portland: Library Association of Portland, 1941). (Mimeographed.)

Staff turnover.—By staff turnover is meant the ratio of the number of separations occurring in a year to the total number of positions at the end of the year. A high rate of turnover indicates that staff members are not being employed on a long-term or career basis, while a low turnover may indicate stagnancy. Though the absence of comparable data for all but a few other libraries makes it difficult to establish norms, from the point of view of a career service in librarianship it is reasonable to consider 15 per cent the optimum rate of turnover.

None of the six libraries in this study has formulated a policy on staff turnover, and none has systematically collected or analyzed the basic data. Some of these figures for the years 1937–41 were compiled in the course of this study but are probably not strictly comparable or altogether reliable. The turnover of nonprofessional employees is found to deviate widely from the suggested optimum of 15 per cent in almost every case, and it usually exceeds 25 per cent, though in some cases it approaches zero for building-service employees. In general, the civil service libraries have higher rates of turnover for nonprofessional employees than do the non-civil service libraries.

Among the professional staff the rate of turnover of junior librarians in all three non-civil service institutions is close to the optimum; this is true of only one of the civil service libraries, Los Angeles. The rate of turnover of the other professional employees, furthermore, is undesirably low in all cases, though it is lower in the civil service libraries than in the non-civil service libraries. There is no evidence to indicate that these turnover rates are the results of a purposive policy, but the actual figures indicate that the record of the non-civil service libraries is more nearly

in accord with approved practice than is that of the civil service libraries.

Summary.—In regard to the three main aspects of over-all organization for personnel administration that have been discussed here, it is seen that the practices of the non-civil service libraries are more in accord with the principles of public personnel administration than are those of the civil service institutions. The outstanding fact in the provision for personnel administration is the existence of a full-time personnel officer in the Detroit Public Library. Recently prepared statements of personnel policy are found in all three non-civil service libraries. Finally, the non-civil service libraries have staff turnover rates that more nearly approach the optimum than do those of the civil service libraries.

POSITION CLASSIFICATION

Just as the nature of the organization for personnel administration in an institution is necessary to an understanding of the selection policies used, so the existence of an adequate position classification plan is fundamental to the operation of those policies. Briefly, such a plan groups together in classes those positions in a library that involve duties of comparable difficulty and complexity and responsibilities of comparable weight. Experience has shown that the three most important considerations concerning position classification plans are: (1) the existence, scope, and basis of the plan; (2) the arrangement of the plan; and (3) the current administration of the plan.

Existence of the plan.—The three civil service libraries in this study have position classification plans which, in each case, are a part of the official city-wide plans of their respective civil service commissions. All positions in these libraries are included in the plans, save that of librarian in the St. Paul Public Library and part-time positions in Los Angeles paying less than fifty dollars a month. The Los Angeles plan was completely revised in 1940. The position classification plan for the Oakland Public Library dates back to 1934 and that of St. Paul to 1932. The Los Angeles and Oakland plans were based on job-description questionnaires filled out by the employees.

Of the non-civil service libraries, Portland and Providence do not have position classification plans. They both have pay plans for certain groups of employees, which are necessarily based on a classification of positions; but in neither case was the classification determined by a factual survey of the duties of those positions. The Detroit Public Library was included in the Civil Service Commission's 1935 position classification plan for the whole city, and job-description questionnaires were secured for all positions in the library. The library authorities, however, were allowed to specify the classes they wished and to establish salary rates for them independently of those used for other classes in the city service.

Arrangement of the plan.—One major test of the adequacy of a position classification plan relates to its arrangement, i.e., (1) the grouping into classes of positions sufficiently comparable that the same qualifications can be demanded, the same tests of selection used, and the same salary scale applied to them all; (2) the preparation of written specifications for each such class; and (3) the arrangement of classes so as to differentiate between professional and clerical work and to provide a career service for each.

Examination of the position classification plans of these libraries and the inter-

views with library officers and employees indicate that the allocation of positions to the main classes is satisfactory in Los Angeles and in Oakland. In both St. Paul and Detroit, however, the two basic classes of the professional service are not clearly differentiated. In Portland and Providence the classification used is known to be based, at least in part, on considerations other than the duties and responsibilities involved.

Class specifications are found in the plans of all three civil service libraries. They are lacking in Portland and Providence; and, though they occur in the Detroit plan, they were prepared by the Civil Service Commission but were never reviewed or approved by the library authorities and are known to include some factual errors.

One of the chief values of a position classification plan to a library, other than as the basis of the salary schedule, is to reveal the assignment of clerical duties to professionally qualified employees, and vice versa. In Los Angeles, Oakland, and Detroit the distinction between professional and clerical work is reasonably well observed; in Portland, and especially in Providence and St. Paul, this distinction is less clear. In none of these six libraries, however, is adequate provision made for a career service for clerical employees, despite conclusive evidence that the major portion of the work done in libraries is clerical in nature.

Current administration of the plan.—A second major test of the adequacy of a position classification plan is found in the current administration of the plan. A fundamental principle of position classification is that the classification plan does not limit the discretion of the administrator in changing the assignment of duties that constitute positions. When such changes are made, however, they should result in a reclassification of the positions in question if the principle of equal pay for equal work is to be observed. A classification plan should be kept up to date (1) by the reclassification of individual positions when their duties are changed and (2) by a periodic review of the whole classification plan in order to determine the correctness of the allocation of individual positions and of the grouping of positions into classes.

The civil service commissions of Los Angeles and Oakland require that changes in duties be reported to them by the department heads. About a half-dozen positions have been reclassified since 1940 in Los Angeles, but no individual positions have been reclassified in Oakland or in St. Paul in the years 1937–41. A classification audit to determine the correctness of the allocation of existing positions was made of clerical employees in Los Angeles in 1941; the Oakland Civil Service Board is conducting a permanent, continuous reclassification survey of the city government, department by department, and the library's turn will come soon; and in St. Paul the classification plan was last reviewed in its entirety in 1932. As far as the investigator was able to learn, there is no serious abuse of out-of-grade[4] assignments in Los Angeles or Oakland, but many library employees in St. Paul are given long-continued assignments to duties in advance of those for which they were selected and are being paid.

Current administration of position classification is nonsystematic in Port-

[4] An employee is said to be working out-of-grade when his duties have been so changed that they are no longer those of the class to which his position was originally allocated but more nearly resemble those of a class in a higher or lower grade. If the two classes carry different salary schedules, the result is that unequal pay is being given for the same work. Thus, a junior librarian assigned the duties of a department head would be working out-of-grade.

land and entirely lacking in Providence. The Detroit Public Library authorities, however, have secured approval of the Budget Bureau and Common Council of the reclassification of a dozen positions since 1937—the best record of any library in this study. At the same time, a 1940 survey by a special city-wide classification committee recommended changes for about thirty library positions. No indication was found of any serious abuse in the assignment of employees to work out-of-grade in Portland or in Detroit, but it is probable that the principle of equal pay for equal work is not always observed in Providence.

Summary.—Not all public libraries under civil service have adequate position classification plans; but, typically, when civil service is applied to a public library, it involves the introduction of an official position classification plan as determined by a work analysis and covering all positions in the library. On the other hand, most non-civil service public libraries have failed to develop adequate classification plans, in part, at least, because of the natural tendency to ignore the plan under the stress of circumstances. In general, the civil service libraries in this study are superior to the non-civil service libraries in their observance of the principles in this section.

QUALIFICATIONS

The first important step in the actual selection of an employee is the determination of the qualifications considered necessary for the position to be filled. Four major factors were considered in this study: residence, disqualification on grounds unrelated to merit, age, and education and experience.

Residence.—Local residence has long been a qualification for government employment in this country, and both civil service and non-civil service libraries tend to fill their nonprofessional positions by the appointment of persons living in the immediate area. The local-residence qualification, however, constitutes a serious impediment to the development of a career service, especially when it is applied to the filling of positions requiring professional or specialized training and experience.

The civil service residence requirement is one year in Los Angeles, four years in Oakland, and six months in St. Paul. This requirement was waived for all examinations for professional positions in the Los Angeles Public Library between 1937 and 1941. The Oakland requirement was reduced to one year's residence in the county for the 1937 examination for junior librarian and to one year's residence in the state for the 1939 and 1941 examinations. The St. Paul residence requirement was waived only once for a library position in the years 1937–41. In these cities, as is almost always true of civil service jurisdictions, the residence restriction is imposed by law. Though the commission is usually empowered to waive this qualification, this means little, since arrangements are not often made for candidates to take the complete examination in other cities; the effective geographic range of selection available to these civil service libraries is thus definitely limited.

In all three non-civil service libraries in the study, professional employees are drawn from the nation. Of the professional employees who were appointed to these non-civil service libraries between 1937 and 1941 and who returned the staff questionnaire used in this study,[5]

[5] This staff questionnaire was answered by thirteen hundred of the two thousand employees in these six libraries. From data supplied by the co-operating institutions, on such characteristics as age, sex,

over two-thirds were living outside the city at the time of their appointment, as compared to less than one-third of the comparable employees in the three civil service libraries.[6] It was also found that the non-civil service libraries drew on more colleges and more library schools for their professional employees in these years than did the civil service libraries. The Detroit Public Library, in particular, has an outstanding record of regularly appointing graduates from a dozen or more library schools scattered over the country.

The superiority of the non-civil service libraries on this principle is to be expected, and the available data confirm this expectation. Not all non-civil service libraries choose their employees from the nation, but the better ones do so, while even superior civil service libraries are restricted to the city or state. The residence qualification is probably the single most important defect in the application of civil service to libraries.

Disqualification on grounds unrelated to merit.—The disqualification of individuals on grounds unrelated to merit is considered in relation to sex, marital status, race, religion, and politics. Civil service libraries are usually forbidden by law to consider those characteristics of candidates that are not related to their actual qualifications, though the wide discretion allowed the appointing officer can be used to circumvent this regulation. The authorities of the non-civil service libraries not only have the same administrative discretion but are free to formulate selection policies that make such nonoccupational characteristics qualifying or disqualifying factors in appointment. This very freedom of the non-civil service libraries means that their stand on the matter is likely to reflect the mores of the community and the personal opinions of the trustees and chief librarians.

There is no policy forbidding the appointment of men to the professional staff of any of these six libraries, nor is there a stated preference for women. Los Angeles, Portland, and Providence have relatively few male librarians; St. Paul and Detroit, on the contrary, have an unusually large number of them. On the average, in January, 1942, the three civil service libraries had six male librarians (7 per cent of the total professional staff), and the three non-civil service libraries, seven male librarians (3 per cent of the total professional staff). In general, it is probable that young men graduating from library school are more likely to be able to secure positions as junior librarians in those civil service libraries investigated in this study than in the non-civil service libraries.

Whether married women should be given employment as professional librarians is subject to more difference of opinion than any of the other grounds of discrimination considered here. For the purposes of this study the disqualification of individuals because of their marital status is considered undesirable. The three civil service libraries have no official regulation or unofficial policy against appointing married women or against continuing their appointment after marriage. Although all three non-civil service libraries discriminate against married women to a greater or less degree, they have probably acted in good faith, influenced no doubt by tradition and per-

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marital status, and previous residence, it was found that the employees answering the questionnaire are representative of the total group.

[6] In order to give each library a weight of one, so that a large institution will not determine the average of its group, the percentages shown here are averages of the percentages of the various libraries and not total averages of the original raw data.

haps by a few unfortunate experiences. Data on the number of married women in the six libraries clearly reflect these policies. In January, 1942, 32 per cent of the women on the professional staffs of the civil service libraries were married, as contrasted with only 12 per cent of the women in the non-civil service libraries.

The appointment of Negroes unquestionably raises delicate problems for the administrator. Though none of the six libraries has any regulation, or even any unofficial ruling, against the employment of Negroes in any capacity, there is reason to believe that this policy of nondiscrimination has not been observed in every instance. In January, 1942, there was an average of twenty-three Negro employees in the three civil service libraries (6 per cent of the total staff), as compared with an average of eight Negro employees in the three non-civil service libraries (2 per cent of the total staff). The main difference, however, occurred in the employment of Negroes as building-service workers. The civil service process makes it difficult to determine whether discrimination against Negroes is being practiced. In any case the civil service libraries approximate the principle in question more closely than do the non-civil service libraries.

In all six libraries the official policy is to give no consideration to the religious affiliation of applicants in the selection of employees. Estimates of the number of Jewish and Catholic employees were secured for four libraries, but the absence of complete data makes it impossible to draw any conclusions. In Portland, however, where the library's application blank asks for religious affiliation, there were no Jews on the staff in January, 1942. The American Library Association Personnel Division and the library schools of Denver, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Columbia—of those whose reports were seen—find it advisable, furthermore, to include information on religious affiliation in their statements on students and candidates for appointment.

In the civil service and non-civil service libraries alike the political affiliation (i.e., whether Republican or Democrat) plays no part in the selection process. On the whole, libraries are relatively free from political interference, though that is not to say that political pressure has been entirely lacking. In recent years politics has at some time influenced the choice of certified eligibles or the filling of minor positions not under civil service in two of the three civil service libraries here studied. In general, however, the civil service libraries in this study appear to have a higher rating than the non-civil service libraries with respect to the principle that individual candidates should not be disqualified because of personal nonoccupational characteristics unrelated to merit.

Age.—By definition a career service demands the recruitment of employees in the entering grades at a relatively early age, so that they may be able to spend their best and most active years in the profession. None of the civil service libraries in this study has a formal maximum age qualification for examinations for junior librarian. In Portland—of the non-civil service libraries—there is no maximum age limit; in Providence applicants over forty will not be considered; and in Detroit the official qualifying age limit is set at thirty-five. The authorities in all six libraries prefer to appoint junior librarians who are under thirty or thirty-five years of age.

From the staff questionnaires used in this study it is possible to calculate the average age of the present junior librarians in each institution who were ap-

pointed to that grade between 1937 and 1941. For the three civil service libraries the average age of these junior librarians, at the time of their appointment, was thirty; for the three non-civil service libraries, it was twenty-six. It appears, therefore, that Herbert's recommendation of a maximum qualifying age limit of thirty is not unreasonable.[7]

There may be some question as to the desirability of age limits for appointments to higher positions, but, if a career service is to be established in a library, there should be a group of young professionals at the entering level, both to secure their vitality for the service of the institution and to provide a reservoir for desirable promotional appointments. On this point the policy and practice of these civil service and non-civil service libraries are generally satisfactory and not greatly different. The advantage, however, is in favor of the non-civil service institutions.

Education and experience.—Another cornerstone of a career service consists of high educational and low experiential requirements for the entering class of the professional service. Such requirements secure junior librarians with a wide cultural background and strong technical training but without extensive practical experience. None of the civil service commissions in this study requires previous experience as a prerequisite for appointment as a junior librarian, though such experience can usually be substituted for part of the required education. In Los Angeles and Oakland, college and library-school graduation are among the formal qualifications for candidates for the position of junior librarian, though the commission in the latter city is without legal power to enforce these qualifications. In St. Paul the requirements for the basic class of the professional service are one year of college and one year of experience as a library clerk.

Of the non-civil service libraries, Detroit and Portland both have an official requirement that candidates for appointment as junior librarian must be college and library-school graduates. In neither library is previous experience required. In Providence the official minimum requirements for appointment to the basic class of the professional service are high-school graduation and completion of the six-month training class.

From the staff questionnaires returned by the present junior librarians who have been appointed between 1937 and 1941, it was found that about 90 per cent of them, in both the civil service and the non-civil service libraries, are college graduates and about 80 per cent are library-school graduates. But, while 63 per cent of the junior librarians in the three non-civil service libraries were without previous professional experience, only 30 per cent of the same class of employees in the civil service libraries were without experience.[8] In other words, junior librarians in the non-civil service libraries have about as high educational qualifications as those in the civil service institutions but tend less often to have had previous experience.

The desirability of high educational qualifications is being questioned by some civil service administrators on the ground that such requirements are more or less arbitrary and that a valid exami-

[7] Clara W. Herbert, *Personnel Administration in Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1939), p. 51.

[8] This figure of 30 per cent for the civil service libraries is the average of the data for Los Angeles and Oakland. St. Paul is omitted because the strict local-residence requirement and the fact that most junior librarians have had experience in the clerical grades of the same library make the situation non-comparable.

nation will select the most competent candidates, regardless of their formal education. This argument is theoretically sound. But written examinations have not yet been brought to such a high point of validity; the high educational requirements, furthermore, are formulated with an eye to future promotion; and, finally, the regularity with which untrained candidates fail to pass examinations for professional positions makes it advisable to save their time and that of the examing agency by eliminating them in advance. On the other hand, the desirability of experience has probably been overemphasized in librarianship. To require experience in other institutions for appointment to advanced positions results in a system of "promotion by moving" rather than one of "promotion from within." In-service training and time will compensate for the lack of experience but not for the educational training which makes college and library-school graduates natural timber for promotion.

Summary.—On three of the four qualifications discussed in this section the policies and practices of the non-civil service libraries are more nearly in accord with the principles of public personnel administration than are those of the civil service libraries. In regard to residence, age, and education and experience, the non-civil service libraries enjoy a superior rating. Only with respect to the principle that candidates should not be disqualified on grounds unrelated to merit do the civil service libraries have the higher rating. The evidence indicates that the qualifications for employment in civil service libraries are likely to be determined by limitations in statutes and civil service rules, while the more flexible procedures of the non-civil service libraries tend to reflect earlier the advancing standards of the profession.

RECRUITMENT AND APPLICATION

One of the salient characteristics of modern public personnel administration is the replacement of the attitude, "Let the man seek the job," by a positive program of recruitment. In this section attention is directed, first, to the public announcement of vacancies, since the number of qualified candidates is likely to be in proportion to the number who are aware of the vacancy; second, to the positive measures of recruitment used, since the efforts to publicize the vacancy in large measure determine the number and quality of candidates; and, third, to the use of the application blank, since it serves as a crude sieve in eliminating grossly unqualified candidates.

Public announcement of vacancies.—According to the usual civil service practice, announcements of all pending examinations for library positions are made by the three civil service commissions in this study. Such announcements appear about four to six weeks before the date of the examination and closely resemble the traditional civil service examination notice in style and form. On the other hand, no public announcement of a vacancy in any position has been made by any of the three non-civil service libraries; this is the usual practice of non-civil service institutions.

The administrators of the non-civil service libraries feel that they already have access to the best sources of supply and that public announcement of vacancies would cause more trouble than it is worth in weeding out unqualified applicants. But public administration experts uniformly advocate the opposite policy: (1) to recruit candidates from a wide field, thereby increasing the chances of securing high-quality personnel; (2) to minimize the covert influence of discrimination against minority groups; and (3)

to force employing authorities to rationalize the selection process. The public announcement of vacancies is a cornerstone of civil service practice, and the failure of the non-civil service libraries to observe this principle is not likely to receive public approbation.

It should be pointed out, however, that the residence qualification normally found under civil service imposes a very definite limitation on the beneficial results of public announcement of examinations. Furthermore, the announcements of examinations for library positions issued by the civil service commissions in this study have not been especially well prepared for selling the job to the best-qualified candidates and inducing them to apply; there is large scope for improvement in this connection. But the practice of the civil service libraries is more in accord with the general principle of the public announcement of vacancies than is that of the non-civil service libraries.

Positive measures of recruitment.—Modern public personnel administration has learned that the employees of an organization can be no better qualified than the group from which they are chosen; that it is not enough to rely on the applications filed solely on the initiative of the candidates; and that a positive program is necessary to induce the best-qualified persons available to apply for a given vacancy. Clear and direct as this obligation is for the non-civil service libraries, it is no less incumbent on those under civil service.

In the three civil service cities in this study recruitment for examinations for library positions has been the responsibility primarily of the civil service commissions, with only incidental and informal participation by the library. The authorities of all three civil service libraries expressed their satisfaction with the recruitment work that has been done by their respective commissions, though the latter have relied for the most part only on the more or less wide distribution of the mimeographed or printed announcement of the examination. This is the traditional recruitment device of civil service. On the other hand, no examination conducted by these civil service commissions in the last five years was announced in any professional library periodical. Nor have most of the examinations for the entering professional grade been timed for the convenience of library-school students, so that registers could be established and appointments made by the end of the academic year.

The non-civil service libraries in this study follow recruiting methods common to non-civil service institutions generally. That is to say, they depend on two main sources for the names of possible candidates: the applications voluntarily filed with them by individual candidates and the recommendations of two or three library schools. The Detroit Public Library, however, draws regularly on the top dozen library schools of the country and—alone of these three libraries—occasionally seeks the help of the American Library Association Personnel Division. The fact that candidates who offer themselves to non-civil service libraries apply on their own initiative renders the use of unsolicited applications of dubious value. And the reliance on the recommendations of the library-school directors rests on the large assumption that they are competent to judge which of their students are fitted for a particular library position.

One of the items on the staff questionnaire used in this study secured information on the employee's source of information concerning the examination or vacancy by which he entered the library's service. Analysis of the three hundred

replies received from employees appointed in 1937–41 revealed (1) that the number of non-civil service employees applying without knowledge of a vacancy was twice that of the civil service employees so applying; (2) that only four persons secured ther positions through the American Library Association Personnel Division; (3) that three-fifths of the nonprofessional employees applied on their own initiative or heard of the vacancy through friends; (4) that only about one-fourth of the employees of the civil service libraries cited the examination announcement as the source of their information; and (5) that about 45 per cent of the professional employees heard of the vacancy through their library school. Though the library schools are therefore the single most important source of candidates, experience indicates that no one method of recruitment will serve to supply the necessary applicants.

None of these six institutions has recognized its responsibility for conducting a campaign of recruitment for the profession. In general, the record of both types of libraries in regard to recruitment is far from bright. The non-civil service libraries have failed to develop a positive program of recruitment, though —as indicated above—they have secured professional employees at least as well qualified as those found in the civil service libraries. The civil service commissions, on the other hand, are doing no more than a reasonably adequate job compared to what they might do. The balance is too close to assign credit to either type of library for the utilization of superior methods of recruiting library employees.

Use of the application blank.—After the recruitment campaign the next step in the selection program should be a review of the applications. The information supplied by the candidate on his application should be checked against the formal qualifications established as minimum requirements, and unqualified candidates should be rejected. This saves the time of both the candidate and the personnel agency and insures the observance of the qualifications that have been established.

In the three civil service libraries the official application blank is that used by the civil service commission. Usually such applications will be accepted only within the time period specified by the announcement of the examination. In all three cities applications are reviewed by the civil service commissions for some of the published requirements (e.g., residence and citizenship), but it is questionable whether they are reviewed for other qualifications to as great an extent as is desirable. Thus, the Los Angeles commission tends not to insist on absolute minimums, and the Oakland commission is unable by law to do so in all cases, though both reject the applications of grossly unqualified candidates. Similarly, these two commissions make no systematic attempt to verify the information supplied by applicants.

In the three non-civil service libraries applications can be filed at any time for any position. Typically, there is a rather full form for candidates for professional positions, but for nonprofessional positions there is either no application form at all or only a brief identification slip. In Portland and Detroit applications are briefly examined upon receipt to determine the candidate's general eligibility, but in Providence this review tends to come only when a specific vacancy leads to a survey of the applications on hand. At that point all three of these libraries verify the information supplied by the candidate for a professional position by

writing to his library school and, in doubtful cases, to his previous employers.

It is difficult to compare the performance of these libraries on their use of the application blank. The civil service application blanks are more complete than those used by the non-civil service libraries, and the process by which they are reviewed is more definite. The verification of the applications of professional librarians, however, is probably superior in the non-civil service libraries. Under both types of personnel administration improvements could be made in the application blank and its use.

Summary.—Neither type of library has demonstrated a markedly superior record in connection with recruitment and application. The civil service commissions in this study follow the usual civil service policy of public announcement of examinations, and their recruitment practices, therefore, tend to be more vigorous and positive. The residence qualification, however, seriously limits the possible effects of these measures and leaves the civil service libraries with little net gain. On the other hand, the non-civil service libraries do not announce their vacancies and utilize relatively few recruitment devices; but the results of their practices have been reasonably satisfactory, at least for professional positions. Both types of libraries are deficient in their use of the application blank.

The record of the two types of libraries in regard to recruitment illustrates the dominant characteristics of civil service and non-civil service personnel administration. Recruitment efforts of the civil service commissions are likely to be thorough and comprehensive but subject to the more or less rigid limitations of statutes, court decisions, and their own rules within which they must operate. Non-civil service libraries, on the other hand, are more flexible in their procedures but less systematic; they do not differ greatly from colleges and universities in this regard. Each approach has its advantages; in the field of recruitment neither approach has achieved a clearly superior record.

EXAMINATIONS

Choosing the successful candidates from among those who meet the established qualifications and who have been induced to apply constitutes the major subdivision of the selection process. Under any combination of circumstances such a decision involves an examination and evaluation—no matter how informal—of the skills and abilities of the various candidates as well as their comparative ranking. Five principal aspects of the examining process are considered in this section: examinations of knowledge; evaluation of personality; intelligence tests; special-aptitude tests; and a medical examination.

Examinations of knowledge.—A primary consideration determining the selection of a person for appointment should be the extent to which he possesses, in a greater degree than his competitors, the knowledge necessary for the performance of the relevant duties. For original entrance appointment to library positions in the last five years the three civil service commissions in this study have used the written test as their principal method of determining the amount of knowledge possessed by candidates. Typically, these examinations were held only in the home city and were composed of short-answer questions. This approved type of examination question allows for the testing of substantial areas of knowledge, especially since the examinations usually last from two to four hours.

The two principal tests of the ade-

quacy of an examination relate to its reliability, or the consistency with which it measures the same thing, and its validity, or the degree to which it measures what it is supposed to measure. The scores on a recent examination for a library position were obtained from each of the three civil service commissions; by the application of various formulas the reliability of these examinations—expressed as a correlation coefficient—is estimated to range from .80 to .88. These are reasonably high correlations as measures of reliability go.

The degree of validity of an examination, however, is both more important and more difficult to estimate than the degree of reliability. Neither the civil service commissions nor the civil service libraries have made any formal studies of the validity of the library examinations.[9] Of the possible methods of measuring validity the only ones used in this study were (1) an analysis of the methods of constructing the examination and (2) the collection of the opinions of library employees, library administrators, and informed local observers as to the validity of the examinations given in recent years. Measured by both methods, the library examinations set by the three commissions rate reasonably well. The important features of satisfactory methods of test construction are found in the practices of all three commissions. In general, too, the questionnaire and interview responses on this point indicate that the recent examinations for library positions are considered to be valid, at least "to a fair extent." The examinations for professional positions, however, were considered less satisfactory than those for nonprofessional positions.

This is not to say that the library examinations of the commissions are altogether adequate, though they are probably superior to those found in other civil service jurisdictions. In attempting to produce reliable and valid examinations the commissions have been forced to keep their procedures painfully rational and consciously objective. The result is that many of the questions deal with minute details at a rather low level of library work and fail to measure the knowledge necessary to several important areas of librarianship. But with research, experimentation, and refinement the general methods of test construction used by these commissions will probably succeed ultimately in securing the desired results.

The non-civil service libraries in this study evaluate the knowledge of candidates primarily by a study of their applications—in effect, an unassembled examination. Neither written nor oral examinations of knowledge have been used for any class of positions, save in the selection of students for the Providence Public Library training class. The use of such an unassembled examination is probably typical of non-civil service libraries generally; but, as used in these three institutions, it is a tool of somewhat questionable reliability and validity. The practices of these libraries fail to include the following necessary points of an unassembled examination: (1) a precise statement, based on a job analysis, of the qualifications desired; (2) the use of a formal rating schedule to insure that all candidates are considered on the same grounds and given equal credit for comparable qualifications; and (3) comparison of the ratings made by at least two judges, to secure objective results.

Most serious of all is the fact that the non-civil service libraries are willing to assume that all graduates of an accredited library school are sufficiently equal in their knowledge of librarianship to make

[9] Two studies have been made of civil service examinations for the Oakland Public Library by students at the University of California.

further differentiation on this ground unnecessary in the selection of general assistants. The wide variations in academic grades, in civil service examination scores, and in the actual performance of individuals are enough to raise questions as to the correctness of this assumption. In addition, various studies in librarianship and other fields tend to cast doubt on its accuracy. Yet the use of written examinations in the selection of employees is rarely found in non-civil service libraries.

In comparison with the techniques used in the non-civil service libraries in this study, the civil service examinations are much further advanced toward achieving the goal of objective, reliable, and valid measures of the knowledge possessed by candidates. They have at least laid the basis on which future research can be built; such a foundation is lacking in the selection work of the non-civil service libraries. In examinations of knowledge the practices of the civil service libraries in this study are more nearly in accord with the principles of public personnel administration than are those of the non-civil service libraries.

Evaluation of personality.—The knowledge possessed by candidates is a measurable and relatively discrete characteristic. So also is the state of their health and, to a lesser extent, the degree of general abstract intelligence that they possess. The other personal traits of the candidates for appointment are here considered together under the general heading of personality. Only a limited amount of work has been done to develop valid and reliable measures in this field; and, typically, the methods used by the civil service and non-civil service libraries are made to apply to all aspects of personality.

In the three civil service cities an oral interview lasting about fifteen minutes forms part of all examinations for professional library positions and constitutes the main method for the evaluation of personality. In Los Angeles and St. Paul the procedures that have been developed are reasonably satisfactory and relatively effective. In both cities only those traits are rated which are thought necessary for successful performance of the duties of the position in question and are observable in an interview; such traits include physical appearance, voice and speech, judgment, ability to present ideas, etc. A panel of three judges is used, including some librarians, though not of the staff of the local public library; the ratings of the judges are recorded on a graphic rating scale in Los Angeles and on a Probst Personality Report in St. Paul.

In Oakland, however, the oral interview is usually conducted solely by the chief examiner of the Civil Service Board; nine-tenths of the interview is an oral examination of knowledge and one-tenth a rating on "Apparent Adaptability"—in effect, the examiner's individual opinion of unspecified aspects of the personality of the candidate. Furthermore, the Oakland Civil Service Board makes a deliberate effort to minimize the influence of the oral interview by limiting the scores for all but the most obviously unqualified candidates to the range between seventy and eighty-five. This policy—that a candidate should not fail the examination because of a low mark on the interview part alone—is followed to a lesser extent in Los Angeles; it is explained in both cases by the disrepute into which earlier oral interviews of these commissions had fallen and by the knowledge that personality ratings are highly unreliable.

In the non-civil service libraries the standard device for the evaluation of a candidate's personality is a personal interview, lasting usually for thirty min-

utes. Normally, only those candidates are interviewed who apply in person or who have been selected for serious consideration for appointment, though some professional employees have been appointed in Portland and Detroit without interviews. In none of these non-civil service libraries is there any formal statement of the specific personality traits desired, save that in Portland the trait most valued is extroversion. In each of these libraries a candidate is usually interviewed separately by at least two officers, but nothing is done to assure that both interviewers will look for the same qualities. No rating scales or report blanks are used; the only result of the rating process is a subjective over-all impression expressed in a few words on the candidate's application.

In addition to these personal interviews with the candidate the non-civil service libraries regularly secure the confidential reports of the library schools and are guided by them to a large extent. The adequacy of the ratings issued by the library schools can be questioned as to their internal reliability (not to speak of the comparability of the reports received from the different schools) and as to their validity. The one study in this field does not induce confidence in the methods used by library schools in evaluating the personality of their students.[10]

Probably the best practical test of personality is the individual's performance on the job during the probationary period. The problem, however, is to predict his behavior on the job; to do this, both the civil service and the non-civil service libraries are relying essentially on a direct face-to-face conversation between the selecting authority and the candidate. Such a personal interview is a valuable tool, but one with limited possibilities. Three main problems are involved: (1) defining the traits desired, (2) concentrating attention on those specific traits in the candidate, and (3) securing reliable ratings. To solve these problems, the civil service commissions rely more on consciously objective procedures and less on intuitive response in their attempts to measure personality. The results are sometimes faulty and often crude, but no better way has yet been found that will bear analysis. Thus, the St. Paul Civil Service Board, which has brought its procedures to a high point of development, has statistical evidence that indicates a reasonable degree of success in isolating personality traits and securing reliable ratings of them.

Though many pencil-and-paper tests of personality are available and widely used, neither type of personnel administration has chosen to experiment with them. To the frequent comment that civil service fails to test for personality must be added the fact that non-civil service libraries also fail to test adequately for personality. The non-civil service libraries in this study are prepared to reject candidates because of unsatisfactory personality ratings, but there is no assurance that, as Clarence Sherman suggests, "personality" is not synonymous with what the selecting officer happens to like or dislike in people. Though the civil service libraries deliberately minimize the influence of the scores for interviews, in two cases out of three those scores are reached through a conscious striving after objectivity. Between these two positions there is little to choose, save that the civil service procedures alone offer the necessary foundation for further progress.

Intelligence and special-aptitude tests.—

[10] M. A. Milczewski, "Personality Rating of Library School Students" (unpublished Master's thesis, Library School, University of Illinois, 1940).

In selecting an employee for a specific vacancy it is natural to think of the particular qualifications needed for that position. But, if a career service is to be developed, the persons given original entrance appointments should be selected with a view to their suitability for promotion to advanced positions. It is for this reason that junior librarians should be required to have had extensive education. For the same reason it is desirable that in the selection process the general intelligence of the candidates and their special aptitude for library work should be considered, even beyond the point where those qualities might be necessary for the immediate vacancy.

None of the three civil service commissions in this study makes any attempt to test for special aptitude in candidates for library positions; and none uses any type of standardized intelligence test—a fact due, at least in part, to their fear of public reaction to what might seem like irrelevant questions. However, the Los Angeles Civil Service Commission, in some of its examinations for library positions, has attempted to measure general intelligence through questions, constructed around library problems and stated in library terminology, on such matters as word usage, ability to analyze situations, and reasoning ability. And the scores on the 1941 St. Paul page examination—which, in view of the elementary nature of the duties of the position, was an examination of general knowledge—are found to have a correlation of .68 with the known intelligence quotients of the candidates, as determined by various standard tests administered no more than five years earlier.

None of the three non-civil service libraries attempts to isolate and measure either special aptitude or general intelligence in the candidates considered for appointment, though they presumably have greater freedom than the civil service libraries to experiment in this direction. Other organizations—particularly the Bureau of Public Personnel Administration—have reported the scores of library employees on intelligence tests; an accumulation of large numbers of such records is needed to provide norms and critical scores for the guidance of individual libraries. Some work in the determination of special aptitude has been done by library schools in connection with the selection of students; but practically nothing has been reported in regard to the selection of library employees, despite the solid amount of research that has been accomplished in the general field of aptitude-testing.

Neither the civil service nor the non-civil service libraries considered in this investigation are taking any steps to measure aptitude or general abstract intelligence, save for a few nonsystematic attempts by the civil service commissions to test for intelligence. Neither type of library has demonstrated a superior record in this regard.

Medical examination.—Examination by a physician before original entrance appointment is clearly desirable for at least three reasons: (1) to secure employees who are in good health and free from disease or disqualifying physical defects; (2) to protect the retirement plan by eliminating potential disability cases; and (3) to prevent financial loss to the library, under workmen's compensation laws, as a result of employee injuries.

In all three civil service cities candidates for library positions are given a medical examination by the civil service commission's doctor, usually after they have passed the written test and are about to be considered for appointment. In Los Angeles and St. Paul this exami-

nation is free; in Oakland the candidate pays a fee of one dollar. The library authorities in the three cities feel that the medical examination is reasonably adequate and report that some candidates for library employment have been rejected on this examination in recent years.

None of the non-civil service libraries in this study has hitherto required a medical examination of candidates for any position, though their application blanks contain questions regarding the candidate's health and physical defects. Late in 1941, however, a series of compensation cases led the Detroit Public Library to institute a medical examination for building-service employees. This will be given by a doctor chosen by the library and will be without cost to the candidate.

The chief purpose of a medical examination is to secure healthy employees. Presumably, the success of this policy should be found in the sick-leave record of the institution. But, when data on this point were secured, it was found that on the average the employees of the civil service libraries were absent six and one-half days in 1941 because of illness, while the employees of the non-civil service libraries were absent less than four days on the average. These data, however, are not altogether comparable, and the records of the institutions in the two groups overlap.

Despite the failure of the data on sick leave to justify the use of a medical examination, the desirability of such an examination is apparent. Since the principle relates to the use of a medical examination and not to the amount of time lost through illness, the practices of the civil service libraries more nearly conform to the principle in question than do those of the non-civil service libraries.

Summary.—The civil service libraries in this study use approved practices in examinations of knowledge and medical examinations to a greater degree than do the non-civil service libraries. The same rating is made of the procedures used by the civil service libraries in the evaluation of personality, but it applies more to the potential than to the actual results of their present policies. Neither type of personnel administration has taken any important steps to test for intelligence or special aptitude. One of the main advantages of civil service is the use of objective examinations in the selection of employees, though the best civil service examination cannot compensate for the elimination of superior applicants because of a residence requirement. On the other hand, the reliance of the selecting officers of the non-civil service libraries on unsupported individual judgments offers no assurance that the "best" applicant will be selected. In general, as far as examinations are concerned, the practices of the civil service libraries in this study are judged to be more nearly in accord with the principles of modern public personnel administration than are those of the non-civil service libraries.

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

The selection process is not completed with the examination of applicants. Appointment procedures are integral parts of the selection process, and their proper functioning is important in a career service. Three such procedures concern (1) temporary appointments, (2) the use of the probationary period, and (3) the maintenance of eligible lists with the names of qualified candidates for positions to which appointments are likely to be made frequently.

Temporary appointments.—The appointment of persons whose services will

be needed for a limited time only is so necessary in the administration of most institutions that provision is almost always made for it in both civil service and non-civil service libraries. Such temporary appointments are sometimes used, however, to evade the qualifications required of permanent appointees. To safeguard a career service, therefore, such abuse must be prevented.

No more than about twenty-five temporary appointments of all kinds are made annually in each of the civil service libraries in this study. This is explained by the relatively stringent civil service regulations. Thus, temporary appointments must be offered to persons on regular civil service registers; in general, the period of service is limited to sixty or ninety days. To secure greater flexibility in work schedules, the Los Angeles and Oakland Public Libraries have developed a corps of part-time employees for the nonprofessional and junior-librarian grades. Though these employees are selected by civil service procedures, they are usually paid at a lower rate than permanent full-time employees doing comparable work.

The regulations for temporary appointments in the non-civil service libraries are less rigid but also less uniform. The Detroit Public Library appoints about forty summer substitutes each year and perhaps a dozen other temporary employees in the winter. In Portland temporary appointments average about ten a year, though substitutes for Sunday or summer work or other short periods are more common. In Providence from ten to fifteen substitutes and temporary assistants are employed at any one time, and substitute work is used as a means of giving practical experience to the training-class students and graduates. All three non-civil service libraries have found it necessary to waive age limits, educational qualifications, and the rules against married women in order to secure a sufficient number of temporary employees. The result is that temporary employees in these libraries are not generally given permanent appointments, except in the case of training-class graduates in Providence.

From the staff questionnaires used in this study it was found that on the average 12 per cent of the present permanent employees of the civil service libraries had entered the service of the library by a temporary appointment, as contrasted with 10 per cent of the employees in the three non-civil service libraries. Furthermore, the present number of temporary employees is uniform—3 per cent for each group of libraries. On the whole, both the civil service and non-civil service libraries have demonstrated points of strength and weakness in their practices concerning temporary appointments; neither group has a clearly superior record in this regard.

Probationary period.—The most valid test of competence yet devised is actual performance on the job. The probationary period should be used intelligently and courageously as the final step in selecting employees. To do so intelligently means that the employee should be informed that he is on probation for a specified period; that he should be given proper orientation and induction into the service; that his work should be systematically evaluated; and that his appointment should be made permanent only by positive action. To use this device courageously means that unsatisfactory probationers should be dismissed.

The official rules of the civil service commissions in this study require a probationary period of six months in Los Angeles and St. Paul and a period of one

year in Oakland. Orientation of new employees is left to the library authorities and consists for the most part of job instruction only. Periodic service rating reports are filed for all new employees by regulation of the library in Los Angeles and of the civil service commissions in Oakland and St. Paul. Probationary appointments in the Los Angeles Public Library are automatically converted into permanent appointments without positive action by either library or civil service authorities. In Oakland the Civil Service Board reminds the library administration of the expiration of probationary appointments for employees who have been given unsatisfactory service ratings; no further action is required or taken. In St. Paul, however, the librarian must specifically request the permanent appointment of every probationer; if no such request is made, the Civil Service Bureau will inform the employee that he is dismissed.

Of the non-civil service libraries, Portland observes no probationary period; in Providence it is one year for professional employees. The official probationary period in Detroit is one year also, but this official period has been largely ignored. Orientation of new employees, especially of nonprofessional workers, is not well developed in these libraries. In 1941 both Detroit and Portland instituted the first of an annual series of talks and planned work experiences, and in Providence new professional employees are required to take the training-class course in library management. Evaluation of the work of new employees is achieved primarily through informal oral or written reports from the employee's supervisor, supplemented by service ratings made annually or less often in Providence and Detroit. In Detroit no positive action is needed to convert a probationary appointment into a permanent appointment; in Providence, however, the librarian usually informs the employee of the successful completion of his probation.

The number of employees discharged as unsatisfactory during their probationary period is uniformly low in all six institutions. On the average, about five probationers—almost all nonprofessionals—were released in the period 1937–41 by each library; this is less than 2 per cent of the total number of appointments made in these years. As a check on the effectiveness of the probationary period one item on the staff questionnaire asked the employee to indicate the length of time he had served on probation. Of those appointed since 1937, 64 per cent in the civil service libraries knew the correct length of their probationary period, as opposed to 23 per cent of those in the non-civil service libraries.

Both types of libraries need to increase the effectiveness with which the probationary period is used as a step in the selection process. But the civil service libraries here studied receive a rating on this principle that is definitely, though only slightly, higher than that of the non-civil service libraries. The latter have developed better induction programs for their professional personnel, but Portland has no stated probationary period and Detroit has largely ignored its official period. The three civil service libraries tend to use formal methods of evaluating the work of probationers, and their employees are more often aware of the length of the period they served on probation than are the employees of the non-civil service libraries.

Eligible lists.—Up to this point the selection process has been considered in terms of the unit position to be filled. Obviously, it would be inefficient to re-

peat the whole process for each individual vacancy, especially for classes of positions to which appointments are likely to be made frequently. For such classes of positions, lists of the best-qualified candidates—as determined by the regular selection process—should be prepared in anticipation of vacancies and should be revised at least annually if they are to retain their value for current use.

Civil service eligible lists are established originally for two years in Los Angeles and Oakland and for one year in St. Paul. In each case they may be renewed once for the same periods, but no registers for library positions have been renewed in recent years in Los Angeles or Oakland. New registers in these cities are usually not established until a vacancy exists for which no eligibles are available; the Oakland Civil Service Board, however, takes special pains to watch the rate of appointments from existing lists and to have new registers available when needed. Eligible lists in these cities are generally ready by six weeks after the examination. All candidates on these registers are informed of their rank and score, and in Oakland the complete list is posted publicly.

None of the non-civil service libraries has formal lists of qualified candidates to which the library authorities necessarily turn first when a vacancy occurs. Most of their new appointments, however, are made in the summer and fall; and the file of applications received by these libraries constitutes a kind of informal eligible list. In all three institutions the selection process starts with a review of these applications; if no satisfactory candidates are found here, recourse is usually had to the library schools. All the nonprofessional and about one-third of the professional appointments in these non-civil service libraries are made from the candidates who have filed applications with the institution on their own initiative.

The procedures of the non-civil service libraries allow them to consider for each vacancy any new candidates who make themselves available. The only parallel to this under civil service is the continuously open examination system, by which candidates may apply at any time, be examined, and be given a rating and a place on the register. Of the three civil service cities in this study, this plan is found only in Oakland, where it was introduced in 1941 for library pages. But the typical civil service procedures are, in general, quite inflexible. Thus, two years is too long for an eligible list to be used advantageously. From the incomplete data available it appears that only about half the candidates who obtained a place on the registers for positions in these civil service libraries in the years 1937–41 were appointed; many of the others probably waived certification or were not available. On the other hand, the non-civil service libraries rarely reveal the rating of candidates for appointment in comparison with other applicants. The appointing officers in these civil service libraries have a choice of the top three names; the authorities of the non-civil service libraries tend to make their final choice from no more than five candidates.

The procedures of the non-civil service libraries are clearly less systematic than are those of the civil service libraries, but at the same time they are more flexible. The civil service registers are used for a longer period than is considered desirable, but the non-civil service libraries sometimes draw on applications that are even older. The civil service registers, however, are given much more public access than are the equivalent records of the non-civil service libraries. Further-

more, it is probable that the non-civil service libraries go through the complete selection process more often than do the civil service libraries for a given number of vacancies. The practices of the civil service libraries are, then, somewhat more in accord with the principles of good personnel administration than are those of the non-civil service libraries.

Summary.—Appointment procedures must be considered in order to secure a full understanding of the selection process. No particular abuse of temporary appointments is found in either type of library, which speaks well for the civil service institutions in view of the traditional misuse of this device under civil service. The potential uses of the probationary period have not been fully explored by either the civil service or the non-civil service libraries, though the former are probably more active in this connection than the latter. Similarly, in regard to eligible lists, the civil service libraries are utilizing this tool to a greater extent than the non-civil service libraries, but with no high degree of skill or effectiveness. In short, the civil service libraries have a record in regard to these appointment procedures that is definitely, though only slightly, more in accord with the statement of the principles than is that of the non-civil service libraries.

CONCLUSIONS

This study does not attempt to answer completely or finally the question of whether it is or is not desirable to extend civil service to public libraries. From the evidence that has been presented, however, some major conclusions may be drawn that are relevant to that question and to the development of a career service in librarianship under either type of personnel administration. These conclusions are presented in three main sections: (1) a summary of the comparison between the civil service and the non-civil service public libraries included in this investigation; (2) the general characteristics of personnel practices in the civil service and the non-civil service libraries; and (3) recommendations for the further development of a career service in librarianship.

Summary of the comparison between civil service and non-civil service public libraries.—The purpose of this investigation was to ascertain whether the application of civil service procedures to public libraries results in programs of employee selection that are more adequate or less adequate than those found in non-civil service libraries. It did not attempt to determine whether civil service or non-civil service libraries have the "better" employees, nor can it pretend to offer any categorical answer to the question of the application of civil service to libraries. Stated in other words, the question to which this study was addressed is this: Do the employee-selection practices of civil service libraries or of non-civil service libraries more nearly resemble those considered necessary for a career service?

The criteria used in this evaluation are twenty principles of public personnel administration, designed to embody the concept of a career service and presumably applicable to all types of governmental agencies. Since all of the principles are not of equal importance, it will be more realistic to summarize the findings according to the six major aspects of employee selection by which the twenty principles were grouped for purposes of discussion. The civil service libraries conform more closely to the principles with respect to position classification, examinations, and appointment procedures; the non-civil service libraries with

respect to organization for personnel administration, and the qualifications for employment; neither type of library has used approved practices, to any great degree, with respect to recruitment and application.

Since the difference with respect to some of these principles is slight, the final result of the investigation may be stated as follows: No substantial superiority has been revealed either by these civil service over these non-civil service libraries, or vice versa, in the use of approved practices of employee selection. The available evidence indicates that, on the whole, the three civil service libraries are using the approved principles of employee selection to as great an extent as are the three non-civil service libraries in this study.

General characteristics of personnel practices in the civil service and non-civil service public libraries.—The bare answer to the specific question at the heart of this study will be better understood by a brief analysis of the essential characteristics of the two types of personnel administration. Three major and differentiating characteristics of the employee-selection practices of the civil service libraries in this study are: (1) the systematic and comprehensive nature of their personnel regulations, accompanied by some rigidity in operation; (2) the tendency of the civil service commission to act only as an external agency for the selection of employees, rather than as a complete central personnel agency; and (3) the general insistence on the residence requirement (or the failure to allow examinations to be taken in other cities), with all its effects in reducing the value of otherwise desirable recruitment and examination practices.

Similarly, three outstanding characteristics of the personnel practices of the non-civil service libraries may be emphasized: (1) the flexibility of their personnel regulations, arising in part from the fact that they are often informal and uncodified; (2) the resemblance they bear to the employee-selection practices of educational institutions, especially colleges and universities; and (3) their failure to develop the technical aspects of personnel administration or to utilize the results of personnel research.

In practice the extension of civil service to libraries has failed to produce the ideal results that contemporary discussions of civil service might lead one to expect. The chief defects found in the application of civil service selection procedures to libraries are: (1) the residence qualification, (2) failure of the commission to understand the library's problems, and (3) failure of the commission to do competent work. But the civil service libraries themselves must share the responsibility for the failure to develop a career service in librarianship. Adoption of civil service insures that government employment shall be a lifework but not necessarily a career service; it does not remove the necessity for internal personnel administration but only alters some of the forms it will take.

On the other hand, the salient fact about the non-civil service libraries in this study is that, on the whole, they have failed to utilize their freedom from civil service to develop a superior program of personnel administration. They are not making the advances in personnel administration that it is reasonable to expect them to have made and that are likely to be demanded of them as the price of their continued exemption from civil service. By and large, they are utilizing practices which are typical and traditional in public library administration; these methods are being applied

more effectively, but their basic design has not been improved. Nor are they applying the newer knowledge of personnel management; the administrators of all three non-civil service libraries in this study feel that they are giving about as much attention to personnel administration as might reasonably be expected.

The bases of modern personnel administration are reasonably clear and well known. Good personnel administration does not require a formal civil service system, but it does require procedures that can be shown by objective and statistical analysis to be valid and reliable. When the practices reported for these libraries are evaluated by principles necessary for a career service, it becomes clear that both the civil service and non-civil service libraries need to give increased attention to personnel administration. The comparative ratings of the two types of libraries made in this study should not be permitted to disguise the fact that neither type of library has succeeded in developing a wholly satisfactory career service in librarianship.

Recommendations for the further development of a career service in librarianship. —Before great weight can be attached to the findings of this study, they must be confirmed or corrected by other investigations. The conclusions of this study are valid only within the limitations of the data that were collected and the assumptions that were made. If it is assumed, however, that the findings of this study are substantially correct, the evidence that has been presented suggests several recommendations for the further development of a career service in librarianship.

With respect to internal administration there are four main points to which attention should be directed. The numerous specific reforms that might thereupon be undertaken are easily deduced from the implications of the concept of a career service. (1) The immediate responsibility for personnel administration should be definitely assigned to a qualified individual. (2) A formal and detailed statement of the library's personnel policies should be prepared and distributed. (3) Adequate personnel records should be installed and a program of factual study begun. (4) Personnel policies for the nonprofessional staff should be reviewed and revised so that a career service may be provided for such employees as well as for the professional staff.

A career service in librarianship can also be fostered in a number of ways that involve primarily agencies outside the library. For example, closer co-ordination between civil service and state certification of librarians would help to establish the qualifications of library personnel. Increased use of joint examinations, co-operatively developed by various civil service commissions, may result in a co-ordinated system for the selection of library employees. The American Library Association and some of the state library associations have shown that a great deal of help can be rendered by these bodies in the improvement of library personnel administration. And the contributions that general personnel research can make to librarianship have not yet been tapped.

Finally, it will not be amiss to point out that one way by which librarians can further develop a career service for themselves is by helping to raise the standards of personnel administration in the public service generally. The proper selection and direction of well-qualified employees is becoming an increasingly important

phase of public administration. All the public service professions are affected, and all are vitally interested in the development of a career service in government employment. The non-civil service libraries should be interested in the matter also, for the issue is not necessarily one of civil service versus non-civil service. Under either type of personnel administration a career service is possible.

The results of this study indicate that superior civil service libraries are using the approved principles of personnel administration in the selection of employees to as great an extent as are superior non-civil service libraries. It has been found that the main disadvantage of civil service is the residence requirement or—what amounts to the same thing—the failure to hold the complete examination in other cities; the main advantage of civil service lies in the use of objective examination procedures. The absence of such examination procedures is the principal defect of the non-civil service libraries, while their chief advantage is found in the flexibility of their regulations. In short, more attention to personnel administration is needed in both types of institutions if a career service in librarianship is to be developed.